

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

USIA-06 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 L-03 H-01 AID-05

IGA-02 EB-08 AGRE-00 /067 W

-----000133 151634Z /44

P 151546Z NOV 77

FM AMEMBASSY ACCRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1015

C O N F I D E N T I A L ACCRA 8654

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, EAGR, GH

SUBJ: GHANAIAN REACTION TO AID/W PRESS RELEASE AND

BBC/VOA BROADCASTS

REF: A) ACCRA 8453; B) STATE 270105

1. SUMMARY: DR. GARDINER RESPONDED WELL TO OUR
EXPRESSION OF REGRET AND SAID HE WOULD CONVEY IT TO

ACHEAMPONG. HE HAD BEEN UNDER HEAVY MILITARY PRESSURE
TO REACT MORE STRONGLY IN AFTERMATH NOV 5 BROADCASTS
BUT BELIEVES WE WILL NOW BE ABLE TO PUT INCIDENT
BEHIND US. END SUMMARY.

2. I CALLED ON COMMISSIONER GARDINER AFTERNOON
NOVEMBER 14 TO GIVE HIM PERSONAL LETTER (DRAWN FROM
REFTELS) EXPRESSING REGRET OVER THE SUBJECT INCIDENTS.
MEETING WENT WELL. GARDINER RECEIVED ME CORDIALLY,
NOTED SRYLY THAT WE HAD BOTH HAD "A ROUGH WEEK" AND
THEN READ LETTER VERY CAREFULLY.

3. GARDINER REACTED FAVORABLY AND SAID HE BELIEVED
LETTER WOULD GO A LONG WAY TOWARDS "PUTTING OUT THE
FIRES" HE ADDED THAT HE WOULD TAKE IT PERSONALLY TO
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ACHEAMPONG AND LET ME KNOW HIS REACTION. HE THOUGHT
IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF I SENT A COPY TO COMMISSIONER
FOREIGN AFFAIRS FELLI AS WELL. I SAID I HAD ALREADY
PLANNED TO DO SO.

4. RECONSTRUCTING EVENTS OF PREVIOUS WEEKEND, DR.
GARDINER SAID NOV 5 BROADCASTS AND ERRONEOUS

INFORMATION THEY CONTAINED HAD HIT TOP ECHELONS OF GOG "LIKE A BOMBSHELL." SENIOR MILITARY OFFICIALS IN PARTICULAR WERE "FURIOUS," AND GARDINER SAID HE HAD CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTY IN CONVINCING "HOTHEADS" TO LIMIT GOG PROTEST TO HIS NOVEMBER 7 LETTER TO ME. SEVERAL OF THEM (EXCLUDING FELLI, HE NOTED POINTEDLY, WHO WAS "MORE UNDERSTANDING") PUSHED HARD FOR MORE DRASTIC ACTION WHICH HE WAS ABLE TO DEFLECT ONLY BY DIRECT APPEAL TO THE CHAIRMAN. HE NOW HOPED THAT OUR RESPONSE WOULD PUT THINGS RIGHT AND PERMIT US TO RESUME THE CLOSE AND CORDIAL RELATIONSHIPS WE HAD PREVIOUSLY ENJOYED.

5. TURNING TO SPECIFIC PROBLEMS OF DISTRIBUTION OF OUR FOOD AID, GARDINER SAID GOG WAS FULLY AWARE OF PAST ABUSES AND WAS STILL MOVING VIGOROUSLY TO CORRECT THEM. HE SAID "HEADS ARE STILL ROLLING" AND CITED JUST-ANNOUNCED SHIFT OF NORTHERN REGIONAL COMMISSIONER ZUMAH TO ACCRA AS EVIDENCE. (WE HAVE ALSO HEARD THAT CAPTAIN DHARMANI, THE UPPER REGION COORDINATOR, FOOD RELIEF PROGRAM, HAS BEEN REPLACED.)

6. I SAID WE UNDERSTOOD THAT ONE OF OUR FFP MONITORS IN THE UPPER REGION HAD BEEN CALLED ON THE CARPET BY THE REGIONAL COMMISSIONER FOLLOWING THE BROADCASTS. I EXPRESSED MY CONCERN, AND THAT OF AID DIRECTOR COKER, CONFIDENTIAL

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OVER THE POSSIBLE EFFECTS ON THE WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOG OFFICIALS AND OUR FIELD PERSONNEL AND HOPED GARDINER MIGHT ASSIST US IN PUTTING THINGS RIGHT THERE AS WELL. GARDINER SAID "GHANAIS DO NOT STAY ANGRY VERY LONG." HE DID NOT THINK OUR RELATIONSHIPS IN THE FIELD WOULD BE SERIOUSLY AFFECTED AND SUGGESTED THAT WHEN OUR PERSONNEL ARE ASKED ABOUT THE BROADCASTS, THEY SHOULD SIMPLY RESPOND THAT THE MATTER HAS BEEN "SORTED OUT AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL" IN ACCRA. HE WOULD PASS ALONG THE SAME WORD TO HIS PEOPLE AND URGED ME TO ASSURE OUR FIELD PERSONNEL "NOT TO WORRY".

7. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH SUSPICIONS OF OUR MOTIVATION AMONG SOME GHANAIS WILL LINGER, GARDINER WILL DO HIS BEST TO PUT THIS INCIDENT BEHIND US AS, I BELIEVE, WILL FELLI. FRANK AND FORTHCOMING NATURE OF OUR RESPONSE HAS HELPED TO LIMIT THE DAMAGE, AND WITH TIME (ASSUMING THAT ACHEAMPONG REACTS AS WELL AS GARDINER DID), I AGREE WITH GARDINER THAT WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO "PUT THINGS RIGHT."

SMITH

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 15-Nov-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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